City of Lafayette Staff Report

To: City Council

From: John M Luttropp, Associate Engineer

Date Written: October 14, 2008

Meeting Date: October 27, 2008

Subject: Modify the pathway configuration Franklin Lane to Valory Lane

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Introduction/Background

The 2007/2008 Capital Improvement Program included the reconstruction of the pedestrian path along Happy Valley Road from Happy Valley School to Rose Lane. After the pathway paving was completed three property owners with concerns regarding the alignment and configuration of the pathway from Franklin Lane to Valory Lane contacted the City, a segment of approximately 900 feet. The residents have asserted that the combination of high vehicle speeds and the close proximity of the path to the edge of the road is dangerous, and they would like to see the pathway configuration modified. Please see attached photographs of as-built conditions.

Staff has responded to the residents and explained the chronology of the project which included a publicly noticed meeting that was attended by a member of the Happy Valley Improvement Association. Staff believes the as-built condition of the pathway is consistent with standard sidewalk design throughout the City as well as 80% of the exiting pathways on Happy Valley Road, which have safely operated for many years without safety concerns.

To address the particular concern of one resident, Mr. Fellner, staff offered to develop modifications to the path if he is willing to contribute to the cost. Verbally he concurred, but Staff has not had any further contact from Mr. Fellner since the initial conversations and a follow-up letter.

More recently, Council member Tatzin requested staff to look into pathway reconfiguration options available for the portion of the newly constructed pathway that is adjacent to the edge of Happy Valley Road. This staff report is to present these options as requested.

Options

Option 1 – Do nothing

As discussed in the project background above, staff believes that the current pathway can operate safely and in accordance with current standards without further modification.

Option 2 – Relocate the pathway away from the edge of the road.

If the pathway is to remain in the City Right of Way the pathway may be moved approximately 3 feet from the edge of the road. If the fronting property owners are willing to grant sidewalk easements and remove existing improvements, the pathway may be moved even further away from the edge of the road. With this option a dirt strip will be created between the edge of the road and the edge of the pathway, which could be landscaped or simply mulched over.

Due to the approaching rainy season and the scope of work, the construction of this option should occur in the summer while school is not in session. This relocation is estimated to cost $51,000.

Option 3 – Widen the pathway to the right of way line.

In this option the pathway would be widened three feet to the existing right of way, for a total of 8 feet wide. The resulting 8 foot wide pathway may be considered visually undesirable by some, and is not consistent with the width of the existing adjacent path segments.

Due to the approaching rainy season the implementation of this option should occur in the dry season. This widening is estimated to cost $32,000.

Option 4 – Install a split rail fence behind the asphalt berm at the edge of the path

This option calls for the installation of a split rail fence similar to the fence installed on the Moraga Road pathway from Saint Mary's Road to Hamlin Road. The installation of the fence will require the narrowing of the existing path by one foot to a width of four feet. This will still satisfy the minimum standard width for a pathway and the installation of the fence could be implemented without delay. Widening could be done in conjunction with the fence installation if it is desirable to restore the width to the current 5 foot width. The restoration of the pathway width could also occur as a separate project in the summer of 2009. Where right of way constraints occur, it would not be possible to restore the additional width without obtaining easements.

The installation of the split rail fence is estimated at $35,000 with the restoration of the pathway width to five feet an additional $17,000.

Fiscal Impact:

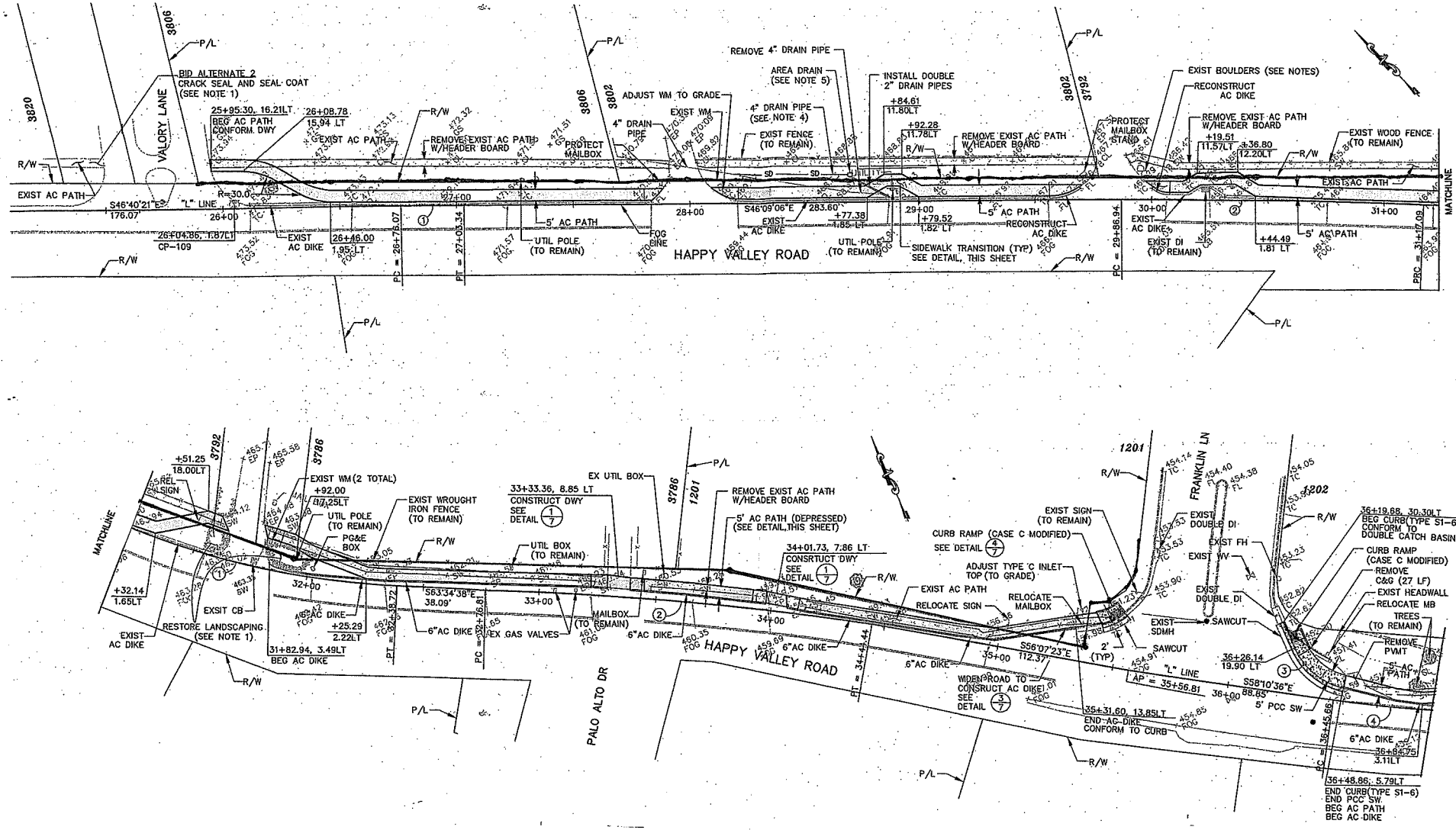
Implementation of the pathway modifications are estimated at $32,000 to $51,000 depending on the option chosen.

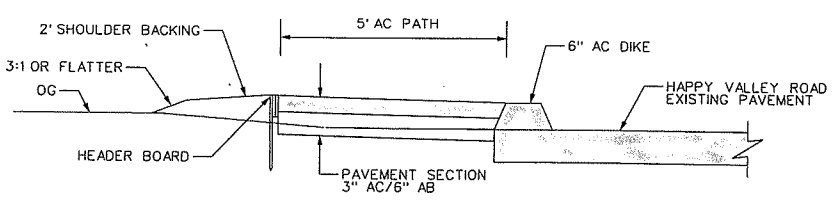
Recommendation:

Staff recommends option 1 to maintain existing conditions.

Photograph #1– Looking West at 3786 Happy Valley Road

Photograph #2– Looking West at 3792 Happy Valley Road





EXISTING PATHWAY TYPICAL SECTION